MONTEREY NEWS

April 2004
VOLUME XXXIV · Number 4

The Town

The poet T. S. Eliot may have been empathizing with taxpayers when he wrote that April is the cruelest month. Not only are annual federal returns due, but local property tax bills are on the way as well. On the other side of the coin, town officials have been working for the past several weeks to put together budgets that plan what's reasonably needed in spending to meet the town's needs. Citizens get a chance to consider the results of all that work when they meet at the informational session planned for April 23 at 7 p.m., and meet again to discuss and vote on the proposed outlays at Town Meeting, scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on May 1—both at the Firehouse. Childcare will be offered at Town Meeting. Some budget highlights, in broad strokes, include:

Highway Department

Two replacement pieces of equipment are requested as part of the ongoing schedule of equipment replacement: an Oshkosh (which is a large, multipurpose, heavy-duty vehicle) and a Ford F550 snowplowing truck, both to replace vehicles that are well beyond their reasonable life and whose replacement was postponed last year. Leasing, which would also allow us to spread out the cost, does not allow us to use our debt exclusion capability. Other substantial costs involve replacing the roof of the town garage, which is leaking badly, and undertaking a state-mandated dam inspection on Lake Garfield, at a proposed cost of $4,000.

Fire Department

A proposal calling for direct payment of firefighters based on their participation in training and responses at fire

Will Marsh

In maple syrup time, Gould Road

or emergency calls is designed to replace the current system of tax abatements. This would mean the department would become a call department rather than a volunteer department, and involves a system of base pay for officers of the department and participation wages for other members. An earlier proposal, which also included a schedule of payments for retired firefighters, has been scrapped.

Schools

A tentative FY '05 Southern Berkshire Regional School District budget, which proposes a modest increase to the towns, is almost $34,000 less than where we were two years ago. This attempt to restore some but not all of that lost funding includes the addition of 3.5 teaching positions, maintains programs, and adds a few textbooks to the supply. School Committee members have worked with Superintendent Spriggs and with town officials to negotiate a budget that tries to balance the needs of the district's children and the perceived financial priorities of the several towns, about which opinions differ while being held with equal conviction. A proposal to create a superintendent's discretionary fund may come forward as an effort to staunch what is seen by many as the fiscal handicapping of the school district. The Select Board commented that if the state had met its promise of funding district transportation fully, no one would be talking about shortchanging the district's children or strapping any town's finances.

Police Department

A new police cruiser is being requested, at a cost of about $25,000 (including siren). Chief Backhaus reported a generally quiet month in March except for a rise in the number of speeding tickets issued, which will mean some additional income for the town. Under discussion is a petition for a radar speed tracker—a large mobile, solar-powered box placed at various places along the roadside (not to be confused with The Roadside) that tells you how fast you are going. The cost is estimated at around $8,000. "That's a lot of tickets!" commented one wag. The goal, according to Chief Backhaus, is to "promote voluntary compliance with speed limits." One model has a feature that blanks out the screen at higher speeds in an effort to discourage the adolescent competitor, who might try to see just how high he or she could push the numbers—while taking unacceptable safety risks and breaking the law. Tyringham has a tracker, and you may have seen it periodically parked just as you slowly enter their village.

Assessors

The Board of Assessors are proposing the creation of a part-time clerk's position to do the office work and data entry associated with keeping the Assessor's records complete and up to date. As the new building inspector has come on board and the town continues to catch up with new growth, it would be cheaper to hire someone at a lower rate to complete needed clerical tasks several mornings a week rather than pay a professional Assessor to do that work. The proposal, which also figures in the pay of the Assessor, nets out at about what we have been spending, but gets the work done more efficiently, the board feels. There is also talk of going to a quarterly tax billing system to make the flow of cash into the coffers somewhat smoother over the course of the fiscal year. The Assessors currently estimate new growth at between 4 and 5 million dollars of real estate, which at the current tax rate ($8.10) would yield about $35–40,000 in new tax revenues. The board continues to work to catch up with improvements made but not taxed, properties that have not been visited in a long time, etc.

Transfer Station Financing

A petition to fund transfer station costs entirely through property taxes has been offered. Other ideas have included staying with the current permit system (now at $100) and a pay-per-throw proposal. Under discussion are views that range from making the cost of disposing of one's garbage just one among many services covered by the town budget, to allowing only those who have purchased a special bag to throw away garbage in it, with the hope that they would thus recycle more to keep their individual out-of-pocket costs down.

Stabilization Fund

Used to help stabilize the town's tax rate in years when there are extraordinary outlays in the budget, the fund represents a kind of savings account on which the town may draw when it needs to. This is one of those years, with the capital requests from Highway and Police departments outlined above and interest on the Town Hall project due as well. Town Finance Committee member Stan Ross proposed that the funds for purchase of the Oshkosh be borrowed, as the municipal rate at local banks is extraordinarily low. "We should take advantage of that,"

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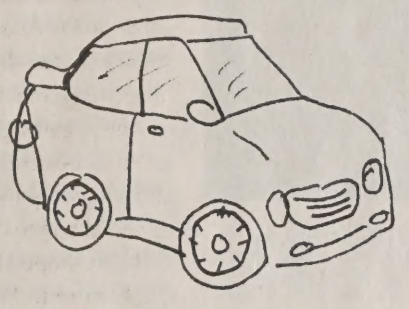
said Ross, noting that he thought it unlikely that such low rates would recur in the future. The plan is to put in $200,000 this year—an increase of $50,000—as we know we have expensive projects coming up in future in the shape of a salt shed, revamping the transfer station to meet an EPA mandate, etc.

Salaries

Salary requests were submitted by managers, and reviewed by the Finance Committee and the Select Board. Increases were given using the rise in the New England Consumer Price Index, which is about 3%. A small pool of merit payments were allocated to individuals whose performance, according to the Select Board, deserved them, and step increases according to the published salary scale were honored. Some remediation of those who had not had step increases in a number of years was attempted, as well as bringing the salary of Head of Operations Maynard Forbes closer to what he was promised initially for taking on the position.



In other news

Sharon Terry, Director of the **Southern Berkshire Medical Reserve Corps,** stopped in to talk to the Select Board about a 3-year grant—one of only 167 received across the country—that Fairview Hospital received to set up, train, and administer a group of trained medical reservists. These trained people would be available in the event of a disaster or other large-scale emergency. The grant underwrites free training in CPR, first aid, and incident command skills to volunteers who are interested in becoming part of the corps. Ms. Terry hopes to have a solid group of 60–70 volunteers, and is looking for each town to supply a town coordinator. Interested?

The Conservation Commission is working on defining important words in their regulations: "nonconforming," "construction," "reconstruction," "demolition," "square footage," etc., are all under review. For special permit applications people are using these and other words in different ways, sometimes in an effort to evade both the spirit and the letter of the regulations. "They might be calling a project 'reconstruction' when it is a new hole with new stuff in it," said Maggie Leonard. Questions such as "What is habitable space?" arise when an attic, not originally considered in your permit, now gains dormers and adds a new level to your house. Large-scale residential development is also being discussed, since the apparent variations are limitless.

Scenic Mountain Act local regulations: There continues to be a great deal of misinformation and mythology around the local regulations being worked on for Monterey's definitions and enforcement of the Scenic Mountain Act. An enormous amount of work has gone into drafting and redrafting, with considerable citizen involvement and participation, and comments heard around town and seen in print do not always reflect a careful reading of the current materials. This is one case where an argument may succeed or fail based on having correct information as well as an opinion.

Town Meeting promises to be both lively and important, and one needs to keep in mind that all of the figures quoted above are subject to change, negotiation, revamping, and adjustment, and may increase, decrease, be dithered over, or stay just where they are between now and the meeting, and then may change again during the meeting. Nothing's final until it's voted on and approved . . . except death and taxes. You can look for the tax bill for the second half of FY '04 in your mailbox around the first of April. The other, we have no control over. See you at Town Meeting!

— K. Wasiuk

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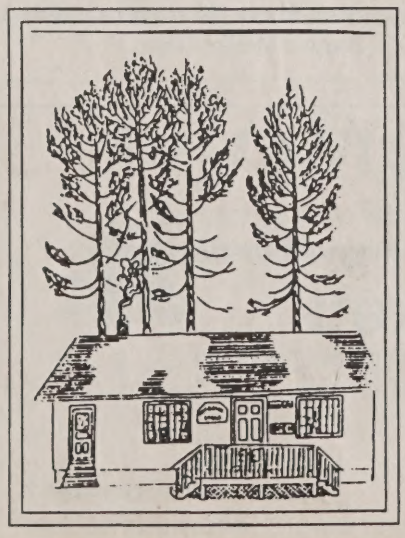

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Michael Storch

Steven Lewis, of Stevens Lake and Brookline, and his son Brian at the Monterey Coffee Club. Brian recently returned from a six-month tour with the Army Signal Corps in Iraq.

May 1 Town Election Slate

Below are the candidates for the three contested races in this year's town election, which will take place on Town Meeting day, Saturday, May 1, followed by a list of candidates running for uncontested seats (inc. = incumbent; all uncontested candidates are endorsed by both Democratic and Republican caucuses). Letters from candidates for contested seats are printed in the following columns, followed by letters from first-time candidates for uncontested seats who chose to submit them.

Note that the last day to register to vote in the town election is Saturday, April 10. Registration forms are available at Town Hall.

Contested Seats

Finance Committee (3 years)
Scott Jenssen (Dem.)
Debra Mielke (Rep.)

Planning Board (5 years)
Paula Moats (Rep.)
Joyce Scheffey (Dem.)

Tax Collector (3 years)
Anne Marie "Mari" Enoch (Rep.)
Patricia Mielke (Dem.)

Uncontested Seats

Board of Appeals (5 years)
Dean Amidon (inc.)

Board of Assessors (3 seats open)
Ricardo Boehm (1 year)
Robert Gauthier (2 years)
Stanley Ross (3 years)

Board of Health (3 years)
Robert Annelli

Library Trustees (2 seats, 3 years)
Anne Marie Makuc (inc.)
Will Marsh (inc.)

Moderator (1 year)
Mark J. J. Makuc (inc.)

Park Commission (3 seats)
Leroy Thorpe (2 years)
Chandler Crawford (3 years)
Linda Mulvey (3 years)

Planning Board (2 years)
Michael Feltser

Select Board (3 years)
Michael Storch

Teasurer (3 years)
Patricia Mielke (inc.)

Tree Warden (1 year)
Roger Tryon (inc.)

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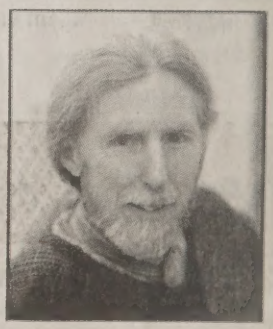

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Candidates in Contested Town Election Races

Finance Committee (3-years)

Scott Jenssen (Democrat) chose not to submit a letter.

Debra B. Mielke (Republican)

I am running for a position on the Finance Committee. The Mielke family has a longtime history with the Town of Monterey and has served on many boards and committees, and I would like to continue that level of participation in town service. I have children and a grandchild living in Monterey and therefore have a great interest of the future of the town.

I had thought I would be running for an uncontested position. I have recently been informed that Scott Jenssen will be running for the position as well. I believe that either I or Scott will be an asset to the town as a member of the Finance committee. Therefore I would only ask that you serve the town on May 1st and vote, whether you follow your loyalties to your family, friends, or the town's best interest in choosing your candidate; the important thing is to participate. Thank you for your consideration.

Legal disclaimer (and to properly identify myself): I am Debra B. Mielke, gardener, postal cleaner, and bookkeeper. I am not a real estate agent nor am I Rick's wife.

Planning Board (5-year term)

Paula Moats (Republican)

Let me introduce myself as a candidate for the Monterey Planning Commission. I am committed to using my energy, experience, and allegiance to further the immediate and long-term goals of the people of Monterey.

I returned to Monterey from Atlanta three years ago after having spent all my childhood summers here. My parents, Marie Bidwell and Frederick Leuchs, have strong and long term ties to Monterey dating back to 1750.

I graduated from Berkshire Country Day School, Miss Hall's School, and Bryn Mawr College. My two sons are now students away at prep school, returning for their vacations.

I commute to New York where I work as an investment banker specializing in financing micro-cap companies.

I have donated time and talent to my communities throughout my life, serving on several boards of nonprofit organizations. Locally I sit on the boards of the Bidwell House Museum and Miss Hall's School.

It would be a pleasure to serve you as your planning commissioner and I respectfully ask for your vote.

Joyce Scheffey (Democrat)

I have lived in Monterey for over twenty-one years, ten of which I served on the Monterey Planning Board. I am very interested in helping the present board with their plans for the future, and am anxious to work for the town once again.

Controlled growth, care for our precious environment, affordable housing, and working on a Town Master Plan are among my major concerns.

There is much activity in the works right now, and much work to be done. People willing and having time to do that work are hard to find. I am, and hope you will elect me to the Monterey Planning Board once again.

Tax Collector (3-year term)

Anne Marie "Mari" Enoch (Rep.)

For those of you who do not know me, I have been a resident of this town all my life. After graduating from Wellesley College, I returned to Monterey, and my husband and I live at Gould Farm. We are committed to living in this town and raising our family here. Currently, I am primarily staying at home with my daughter and working part-time on weekends.

Two and a half years ago, the Monterey Select Board appointed me as Assistant Tax Collector to assist my father in his role as Tax Collector. Through this position, I have experienced all the tasks and responsibilities of the Tax Collector's job. I have a complete understanding of what the job of the Monterey Tax Collector entails. I am confident that I possess the skills, knowledge, and time to perform all of the duties required of this position.

In addition, for the past two months I have been temporarily assisting the Board of Assessors in a clerical position.

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This experience has given me a greater understanding of their work and how it relates to the Tax Collector's.

If elected, I look forward to moving the Tax Collector's office to the Town Hall, where it will be more accessible to the public during normal business hours. I also look forward to beginning work toward my certification as soon as allowable by law. I recognize that as the needs of the town change, the job of the Tax Collector may change or expand. I am committed to responding to these needs. For example, should the town ever decide to change to a quarterly billing system, I am completely willing to take on this or any other responsibilities requested.

Patricia Mielke (Dem.)

This letter is to introduce myself, Pat Mielke, as a candidate for election as Tax Collector for the Town of Monterey.

Through the Massachusetts Collectors/Treasurers Association, an organization that sets the professional and ethical standards across the Commonwealth, I have earned certification as a Municipal Tax Collector and a Municipal Treasurer. In addition, I hold a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management/Accounting from Westfield State. Along with nine years experience in the municipal field as Treasurer for the Town of Monterey, and six years as Tax Collector/Treasurer for the Town of Egremont, I have been a small business owner for over thirty years, specializing in accounting services. I was also employed from 1992–1997 as an accountant at Gould Farm.

My education, coupled with my experience, makes me an ideal candidate for the position of Tax Collector. One of my unique experiences in the municipal field is the transition of the Town of Egremont from semiannual tax payments to quarterly tax payments. If the Town of Monterey should accept the warrant article asking for a change to quarterly payments, my experience would help to facilitate the change.

My election would create an opportunity for the Tax Collector's office to be established and operated from our newly renovated Town Hall. This would allow for open office hours, accessibility, and taxpayer convenience. With the newly acquired space we would be able to process all payments/inquiries as they are received, eliminating expenses and generating income associated with tax revenues.

In closing, it would be an honor to serve the Town of Monterey as its Tax Collector. I would appreciate your vote May 1, 2004.

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Introductions from Uncontested Candidates

Select Board

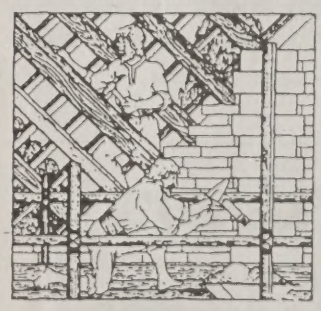
Michael Storch

Once again I would like to offer my services to the town of Monterey and run for the soon-to-be-vacated seat on the Select Board.

Having now spent almost two years attending the weekly Select Board meetings, I feel comfortable with their weekly operations and with the duties of the Select Board members. My appointment, this year, to the Conservation Commission to replace a nonactive member has been very beneficial to my understanding of the commission and its responsibilities. (I was appointed after regulations for the Scenic Mountain Act had already been formulated).

I have the time, ability, desire, and experience to be a valuable asset to the town of Monterey. I don't have an agenda that would, or could, lead to biased decision-making and I owe no allegiance to any person, persons, or group.

I am asking for the favor of your vote on May 1, 2004. Should I be elected, I ask that you give me your ideas on what should be done or should not be done in various town activities, whether these are criticisms or helpful suggestions, during my time in office.



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I will meet with you at your home in Monterey.

Cemetery Committee

Chuck Mielke

I would like to inform the Town of Monterey of my interest in being a member of the Cemetery Committee.

My interest in in helping to plan for the future of Monterey as an active participant in the town's growth.

I look forward to working with other town members to ensure a positive future.

Planning Board (2-year term)

Michael Feltser

I am privileged to be nominated to a position on the Monterey Planning Board.

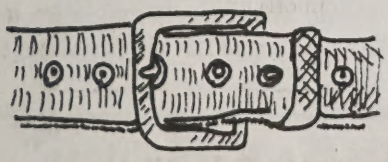
May I be permitted to introduce myself.

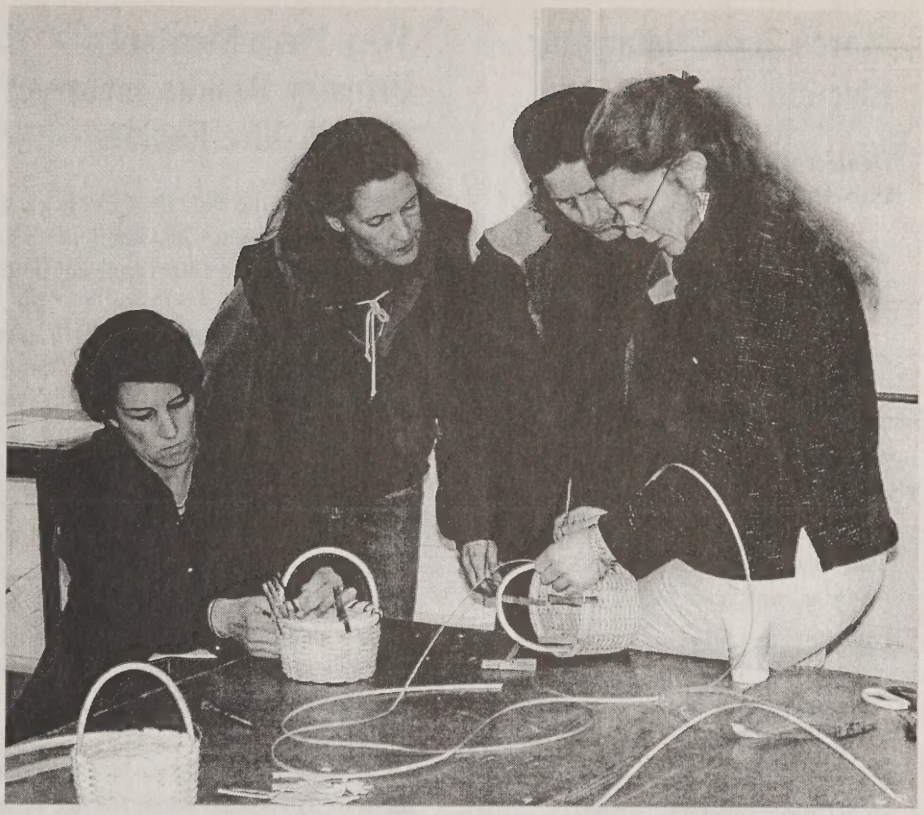
I first came to Monterey in 1978, and became a full-time resident in 1988. My wife is a "native" of the area, being born in Pittsfield, and three of our four children attended area schools.

My career as an executive for the JC Penney company provides me with experience in dealing with matters in a practical, commonsense manner.

If elected, I promise to work assiduously in the best interest of the town I hold dear, and am anxious to maintain its unique appeal.

Your support in the upcoming elections will be greatly appreciated.





Joe Baker

l. to r.: Deb Mielke, Ann McGinley, and Sue Johnson getting tips from Wendy Jensen on basketmaking at March 20th workshop sponsored by Cultural Council .

Llamas Coming to Dinner

Winter is winding down but the community dinners are still going strong. Last month's program by Eric Martin attracted what must have been a record crowd. Eric, a Gould Farm volunteer, well-known local musician, and master violinist, entertained and educated the audience with his violin and viola, highlighting the difference between the music of each instrument. His personal journey from orchestra member to fiddle player was as interesting as it was fun. Thank you Eric for bringing your talent once again to our community.

On April 14 the community dinner program will feature the llamas of Melissa Preston, Jeffrey Litishin, and their son Mac. Their family business on Route 23 in Monterey began six years ago with two llamas. Now they breed, show, and sell the animals and harvest their wool—shearing, carding, spinning and weaving it themselves. Their work with these fascinating creatures has won them awards at the Big E and allowed them to travel with their llamas as far away as Nebraska and Oklahoma.

The potluck dinner begins at 6:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall in the basement of the Monterey meetinghouse. Everyone is welcome. Please bring a place setting for each member of your party, a dish to share with the group, and a serving utensil if your offering requires one. The program will begin around 7:00 and end by 8:00. See you there!

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March 2nd Primary Election Results

Democratic Ballot

President
- Clark 1
- Dean 9
- Edwards 21
- Kucinich 29
- Kerry 81
- Lieberman 1
- No preference 1

State Committeeman
- Peter Arlos 61
- Matt Barron 45

State Committeewoman
- Margaret Ware 107

Republican Ballot

President
- Bush 20
- No preference 4
- Kerry 2 write-ins

State Committeeman
- Blanks 23
- Matt Kinnaman 3 write-ins

State Committeewoman
- Blanks 26

Green-Rainbow Party had 2 ballots.
Total number of ballots cast was 172.

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Why Were Monterey Primary Results Incorrect in Berkshire Eagle?

How did the *Berkshire Eagle* get the vote tally wrong for Monterey in its primary election results reported in the March 3rd issue?

Following instructions she had received beforehand, Town Clerk Barbara Swann telephoned the Associated Press (AP) on Tuesday night, March 2nd, with Monterey's results after the polls were closed and the votes were tallied. She also called the *Eagle* offices to give her report, but was told rather definitively that it wasn't needed since the *Eagle* was getting their results from AP. Yet the Wednesday, March 3rd, issue of the *Eagle* reported a vote count for Monterey that was wrong on all counts, mystifying some Montereyans who knew that more of their neighbors had voted for one or the other candidate than the votes shown.

When Barbara Swann saw the incorrect numbers, she called the *Eagle* to find out what had happened. The *Eagle* representative was apologetic, but said they had accurately reported the numbers given them by AP, and that Barbara should talk to AP. Barbara then called AP, and their representative was very apologetic, admitting they had made the mistake and were trying to find out how. Later in the week they called back with their explanation, which goes like this. When Barbara called in the numbers, they were handwritten on a sheet of paper (which AP had located) and then entered into their computer. Shortly thereafter, a reporter for one of the Springfield papers called AP to check on various results. One of the towns discussed was Montgomery, whose results the AP had not yet received, but the Springfield paper had, whereupon the Springfield reporter read out the Montgomery results as the AP reporter typed them into the AP computer; however instead of typing them into the Montgomery section, they were typed into the Monterey section, overwriting the accurate results for Monterey reported by Barbara. When the Montgomery town clerk later called AP with the Montgom-

EASTER EGG HUNT

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ery results, they were typed into the still blank Montgomery section. So the Montgomery results wound up in two places in the AP computer, the Montgomery section and the Monterey section. AP assures Barbara that they are "instituting new policies to make sure this doesn't happen again." (It does not appear that the *Berkshire Eagle* ever reported the correct results for Monterey.)

There is a coda to the story. Early on Wednesday morning, March 3rd, Barbara was trying to catch up on her sleep after a late night of vote counting when she was disturbed by the telephone ringing. It was an irate caller, who went on and on about how Barbara had left two names off the ballot and how terrible this was and how it had invalidated the results. He went on for so long that he almost made Barbara think that maybe she had made a mistake, but then he said something that made it clear he was not talking about Monterey. When Barbara asked which town clerk he thought he was talking to, he said "Montague!" Upon learning he was speaking to the Monterey town clerk, he hung up abruptly.

— Will Marsh

Berkshire Taconic Accepting Scholarship Applications

Three scholarship funds for local students, managed by Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, are accepting applications through May 1, 2004.

The McLaughlin-Wilson Scholarship Fund accepts applications from students who have lived in Monterey for at least the last two years of high school. Grants usually range from $2,000 to $7,500 and can include awards over multiple years. Applicants will be reviewed by a committee of five residents of Monterey based on the combined criteria of: the student's academic achievement, efforts and ambitions to achieve their academic and life goals, financial need, and community service. This fund was established in 1994 by a bequest from Edith Wilson as a resource for the residents of Monterey to assist families with children who are pursuing a post-secondary education.

The Honorable James P. Dohoney Scholarship Fund accepts applications from graduating seniors of Monument Mountain Regional High School, Mount Everett Regional High School, Lenox Memorial High School, and Lee High School. One scholarship of $1,000 is awarded annually. Applicants will be reviewed by a committee of local residents based on the combined criteria of: significance of the scholarship to the student, demonstration of motivation to succeed in pursuing a two- or four-year college degree, financial need, and academic potential. This fund was established in 1999 by friends and family of Judge James P. Dohoney (1942–1995), who honored the Southern Berkshire Community through his devotion to his family and the legal profession.

The William Stanley Scholarship Fund accepts applications from students who have lived within Berkshire County during at least the last two years of high school. One scholarship of $3,000 a year for up to four years is awarded annually along with other one-year scholarships. Applicants will be reviewed by a committee of Berkshire County residents, based on motivation and academic achievement, SAT scores of 1000 or more, placement in the top 20 percent of the class, a GPA of at least 3.0, financial need, and a plan to attend a two- or four-year college. This fund was established in 1991 following the dissolution of the General Electric employees' Stanley Club, named after William Stanley, an inventor and pioneer in the early development of the electrical industry who took advantage of alternating electrical current at its early stage of development and demonstrated its practicality by his historic lighting of stores and hotels on Main Street in Great Barrington on March 20, 1886.

Application forms are available online at www.berkshiretaconic.org/grants-scholarships.html or by calling Berkshire Taconic at 800-969-2823.

Cemetery Notice

All winter decorations on the graves in the five cemeteries in Monterey must be removed by April 15, 2004 in preparation for spring cleanup.

Also please remember that glass containers are NOT allowed.

— Linda Thorpe, Cemetery Com.

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Eagle & Janet's Fund, Other South County Educational Enrichment Funds Accepting Applications

The grant application deadlines for 2004 for southern Berkshire County public schools' educational enrichment funds are (deadline for Berkshire Hills Fund for Excellence was March 31):

- **April 15:** Eagle and Janet's Fund; for Southern Berkshire Regional School District
- **April 15:** Lee Educational Enrichment Fund
- **May 15:** Lenox Educational Enrichment Fund (LEEF)

Students, teachers, administrators, staff, parents, and community members are invited to apply for grants for projects that promote excellence in their respective schools or school districts by providing educational opportunities that take students beyond the standard curriculum. Grants will generally range from $100 to $1,000. Applications are available on-line at www.berkshiretaconic.org/grants-scholarships.html and at each school's office.

Each fund has an advisory committee comprised of community residents, teachers, school personnel, and/or students that will review applications based on: excellence of the project, impact on the school community and ability of the applicant to carry out the project.

The mission of each fund is similar: to support innovative educational programs and projects that would otherwise not be available to students in Berkshire County's public schools. Types of programs that might be supported include: visits by authors, artists, or speakers; purchase of materials for special projects; field trips; enrichment programs for teachers; student initiated projects; or after-school curriculum-related programs. Examples of programs that have been previously supported by educational enrichment funds include: a dance residency teaching human anatomy and physiology; scholarships for high school chorus students to attend a national music festival; a peer-training program that promotes a prejudice-free environment; snowshoes for outdoor winter physical education; and an on-line career guidance tool.

"We raised nearly $400,000 from outside the county to offer every school a challenge grant to set up and grow one of these funds—and they've done it!," said Jennifer Dowley, Berkshire Taconic President. "The last few signed on this past fall, completing an incredible countywide resource for our children. I'm thrilled with the success of these funds. Local community members and businesses are really stepping up to the plate to support them."

Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation manages and invests the educational enrichment funds' endowments and assists each committee in its organization and grantmaking efforts. Berkshire Taconic is a nonprofit organization that works to cultivate philanthropy in ways that have a direct positive impact in Berkshire, Columbia, northeast Dutchess, and northwest Litchfield counties. To make a contribution to any of these funds or for information, contact Berkshire Taconic at 271 Main Street, Suite 3, Great Barrington, MA, 800-969-2823, or visit www.berkshiretaconic.org.

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Local Students Receive Awards

Christina Vallianos Receives Bausch & Lomb Science Award

Christina Vallianos, daughter of Peter and Evelyn Vallianos, is Mount Everett Regional School's recipient of the Bausch & Lomb Science Award.

Recipients must demonstrate excellence in all science courses. Standardized test scores in math and science also are a factor. Winners are eligible for a Bausch & Lomb scholarship valued at $24,000, should they attend the University of Rochester.

Vallianos is a member of the National Honor Society, Rotary Interact, and Students Against Destructive Decisions. She is also a member of the varsity soccer, basketball, and softball teams.

Tarsi Dunlop Selected to Attend Young Writers' Conference at Bread Loaf

Tarsi Dunlop, daughter of Susan Sellew and Wayne Dunlop, has been selected to attend the New England Young Writers' Conference at Bread Loaf. Tarsi is a Junior at Berkshire Country Day School.

Students were asked to submit a piece of writing in the form of prose, poetry or a screenplay. Tarsi's submission was a short fictional exploration of family dynamics. Each high school may submit only two applications from eligible juniors and sophomores. From these applications a select number of students are invited to attend the Conference at Middlebury College in Vermont, May 13–16, during which they are required to write a second piece in one of the genres. Awards, based on progress, are given at the close of the Conference.

Transfer Station Hours

Summer Hours eff. Apr. 4

Sunday..... 10 a.m.–6 p.m.
Wednesday.... 8 a.m.–1 p.m.
Saturday ..... 8 a.m.–1 p.m.

Spring at the Bidwell House Museum

A sure sign of spring at the Bidwell House Museum is the annual trail cleanup. After a winter of heavy winds, ice, and snow the trails that surround the museum are ready for some attention, and we invite all the museum's friends to join us in pushing back winter's advance. The annual cleanup involves much more than work—museum members George Emmons and Richard Greene will share historical tidbits as we walk in the woods toward the Meeting House.

Anyone interested in volunteering should plan to meet at the front porch of the Bidwell House on Saturday, May 15, at 9:00 a.m. The rain date will be May 22. Be sure to bring gloves and even some insect repellant. Coffee, juice, and bagels will be provided. We look forward to a bright and sunny day so please come out and join us in the fun. No need to sign-up in advance, but if you have any questions call the museum at 528-6888. Here's to an early and warm spring!

Green Corner

Mercury in Our Environment: Problems and Solutions

Mercury, commonly found in fever thermometers, thermostats and other household items, can cause serious health and environmental problems. Breathing the vapors from a broken thermometer or touching the mercury may be harmful. However, the greatest risk is from eating mercury-contaminated fish. Mercury can affect the human brain, spinal chord, kidneys, and liver. It is particularly dangerous to fetal development and small children. The EPA recently estimated that every year 630,000 newborns in our country are at risk for health problems because of unsafe mercury levels. This is much higher than previously thought.

Nationally, burning fossil fuels, primarily coal, is the largest source of mercury released into the environment. In Massachusetts, the largest source of mercury pollution occurs when products containing mercury are thrown away and incinerated. Whether landfilled or incinerated, mercury eventually ends up in lakes and streams and travels up the food chain. In the Berkshires, Pontoosac Lake, Konkapot River, and Big Pond have fish advisories due to the presence of mercury (state.ma.us/dph/beha/fishlist.htm).

These are steps individuals can take:

• Make smart purchasing and disposal choices. Avoid buying products that contain mercury. Dispose of items safely at town hazardous waste collections.

• Use less electricity. Compact fluorescent bulbs use up to 75 percent less energy. Bring used fluorescent bulbs to the town transfer station. Purchase products with the Energy Star® logo.

* Fish smart, eat smart. Pregnant women or women who may become pregnant, nursing mothers, and children under the age of 12 should limit their intake of freshwater fish to 8 ounces per week and avoid larger fish, such as tuna steak, swordfish, shark, king mackerel and tilefish, because these fish generally accumulate higher levels of mercury. Chunk light tuna has less mercury than white albacore tuna, but it's advised to eat less than one small can per week.

For more information on mercury or other waste management issues, please contact Joy Kirschenbaum at 413-445-4556, joyk@cetonline.org, or visit CET's website at www.cetonline.org. CET is a community resource conservation organization serving western Massachusetts since 1976.

— Joy Kirschenbaum, CET

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Psalm of the Emptiness

the sun glitters bright upon the snow
but midnight here is all I know
I pass your room, your open door
your empty bed's deserted shore
what song to sing
in place of footsteps
what poems to pitch
into the windswept
then God comes by in his firebird suit
blowin' his horn with a rooty-toot-toot
sayin' "boy, you best sing to that girl
lest you be trollin' oceans for pearls!"

it's ten below out by the ash can
the tea's been poured by morning's hand
but your tea bowl sits up on the shelf
cold and empty and tea boy bereft
what melody
to make the heart heal
what verses to
give voice to or steal
then God comes by in his moon shine hat
beatin' his drum with a ratta-tat-tat
sayin' "boy you best whisk it up quick
lest the tea'll be cold and she'll be sick!"

I'll walk it off up the hill I think
and goods the time between meat and drink
but wouldn't you know it, each damned tree
I pass is one you've touched and freed
what blues to sing
to soothe the aching
what rap to write
to keep from breaking
then God comes by in his grapeshin shoes
shakin' his tambourine shakka-shak-shu
sayin' "boy you best buy her a car
that flies you both to your evening star!"

— R. Zukowski

Silences

She wrote:

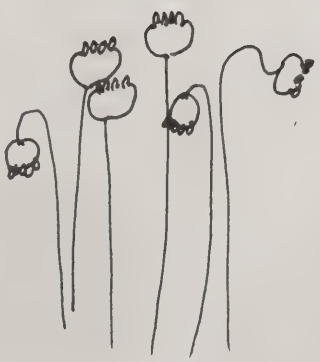
The selection of silences
is somehow saddest in the spring:
the tree that bears no leaves
the woman man deceives
all irons touched by rust
the dog in the highway dust
the rock not reached by the tide
my gut inside
the rotting rotten porch
with dead grey rocking chair
all hands folded
quiet in despair
The selection of silences
is somehow saddest in the spring
yet what a sunpricked comfort
love would bring!
and what a sparkling racket
love could sing!
what banging bells of change
love could ring!
were your silence not selected
by this spring!

— A. O. Howell

Spring — the Resurrection Season

When the flowers that have all winter slept
Push through the warming earth of a new spring;
The trees put on their garments of green once more,
And birds return and build their nests, and sing;
The butterflies emerge from chrysalids
Which kept them from the winter's chilling colds
Through a marvelously metamorphic change
Wait in the sunshine till their wings unfold.
The brooks run high, and willow's tresses wave
As gentle springtime breezes pass them by;
And peepers raise their voices once again
When stars appear to twinkle, in the sky.
Such miracles the seasons always bring...
All nature seems to resurrect in spring!

— Eleanor Kimberley



Mid-March: Pearls from the Sugarhouse Mouse

Our sugarhouse is, for us, a seasonal-use building. We made it ourselves, years ago, to be a sugar refinery for spring use. The rest of the year we store buckets and spiles in there, also tanks and tubing. There is an attached woodshed where we spend time in the fall stacking up the firewood we wouldn't want to let in the house: hemlock, white birch, cherry, red maple, white pine.

Once the wood is stacked we don't visit the sugarhouse much until the first thaw in February or early March. Then it becomes our work center for a few short weeks. We open the creaking door and take a look around: most things are just where we left them when we cleaned up last year. Still, it's obvious we are not the only ones using this building.

Our tenant is the sugarhouse mouse. She has been living there for years and in my opinion she is a poor tenant. Not only does she nibble on the furnishings, including our tubing, she leaves mouse droppings all over the counter. Out in the woodpile it looks like she welcomes any rodent relatives in the world to snack and party, leaving their empties (acorns, mostly) lying around. I go out, all businesslike, for an armload of wood for the evaporator and I get acorns rolling down my neck and into my boots.

I consider myself a tolerant landlord. For one thing, I know that I am a person "who lives in a glass house" since my own housekeeping is none too great. For another thing, it makes me feel funny to have this fine building standing out in the woods all those months when I don't even think about it. The burdens of ownership and responsibility are mollified some by the fact that it is providing useful shelter to my tenant and her pals. So while I feel her to be a poor tenant, I at the same time use this mouse to ease the background guilt I maintain over Too Much Ownership of Things. This is a delicate balance but I am up to it most of the time. My only problem comes during sugaring season when I find myself face to face with the actual mouse.

"Hello, there! The famous absentee landlordess graces the premises for a few sticky days. How's things in the big world outside?"

She hasn't changed a bit. She is sparkling and gorgeous in pale tan uppers and white unders with a long graceful tail which she flaunts by washing unnecessarily while I am talking to her. She has delicate ears which are constantly moving and fluttering at the edges, always reminding me that although she may be listening to me she is certainly picking up a great deal else which I know nothing about.

"Oh, it's you," I say, thinking this is not the snappiest reply. Why do I feel our conversations to be some kind of competitive banter?

"The truth is, the big world outside is not in such great shape. We got global warming, we got sickness and strife. We got war and terror and a presidential election with a lot of money getting thrown away on stupid stuff. You are just lucky you don't know anything about it, can't even read the paper."

"I'm WHAT? I'm lucky? Do you know we had a cat over here just a few days ago? *Your* cat, in all likelihood. I'm glad you think my life is all acorn parties and licking up spilled maple syrup. You think I don't know from terror? Can't believe you people think you are the only ones with troubles: typical I-and-Thou problem if you ask me. Of course one distinct advantage we little beasties do have is we don't carry around your well-known background guilt to which you refer in paragraph four."

"Right, and how fair is that? Don't you make a mess in here? Don't you leave your little droppings all over the counter like there was no tomorrow, like

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somebody isn't going to have to come in and clean it all up?"

I've got her now, I think. We all take it in and we all give it out, right into the environment. In a minute I am going to tell her about carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Well, maybe not. Looks like she is leaving. I never know how long these audiences will last and she has the aggravating advantage of being able to scamper off when her little ears pick up some news that interests her more than I do.

"Ah yes, mouse droppings. Well I'll tell you, honey, they do not bother me a bit. I lose no sleep over my mouse droppings. I gotta run right now, little party happening out in the woodshed. But if you and your kind want some advice, if you want a nice short furry guilt-free life like mine, get your leavings down to a few mouse droppings and some acorn shells. They make good compost, feed the sugar maples, guaranteed not to turn around and poison you. They won't even change the climate."

She's gone with a flick of that tail. I ponder these pearls from my tenant/guru. At the end of the day I climb into the pickup and turn the key. I am wishing I had sparkly eyes and white unders, a tail to clean when the going gets tough, a party in the woodshed. I head down the road to the house and fantasize about the tailpipe on the truck: I picture it leaving a little trail of mouse droppings and acorn shells down Hupi Rd.

— Bonner J. McAllester

Highland Communities Initiative April Events

Rural Roads Seminar April 3

Scenic country roads are a distinguishing characteristic of rural towns, and improvements along them are often a much-debated topic in small towns. On Saturday, April 3, the Highland Communities Initiative is sponsoring a Rural Roads Seminar at the Cummington Community House to discuss road classification, improvement, and discontinuance. State, regional, and local experts will present information on topics such as the road improvement process, public involvement in road projects, discontinuance of town and county roads, and programs to preserve the rural character of special roads. State Representative Steve Kulik will give the keynote address.

Registration is $10, or $15 including lunch. Registration materials are available on-line at www.highlandcommunities.org or by calling 413-587-0716 extension 14.

Special Opportunity for Conservation Commissions

Thanks to a partnership of the Highland Communities Initiative and the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions, conservation commissions in the 38 Highlands towns will have access to two fundamental training sessions in April and May. On April 13 in Becket Town Hall, Scott Jackson of UMass Extension will teach a workshop on the function and value of wetlands, including common vegetated wetlands, regulatory definitions, water quality, and buffers. On May 15 in Stanton Hall in Huntington, Priscilla Ryder, a Conservation Agent, will be leading a session on writing effective orders of conditions, including how to handle denials, appeals, amendments, and extensions, as well as how to write special conditions. Both of these sessions will be offered for half of the usual fee of $45. For more information or to register, contact Maureen Febiger at 617-489-3930 or Maureen.febiger@maccweb.org.

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The Eyes Have It

Barely one week before the first day of spring, the local black bears begin to prowl our back yards either in broad daylight or just after dark, depending on how hungry they are when they finally desert their winter dens under brush piles in the swamps around Lake Garfield. You may be the first to know when you find what is left of your birdfeeders on the ground surrounded by muddy imprints of monstrous pigeon-toed tracks. Moose tracks have been seen less than a mile from my house, so bears are not the only species of big game already out and about to replenish their food intake, after a very hard and long winter.

Herds of deer have been what is called "penned up" much of the season, confined to isolated stands of heavy conifer canopy cover, and rarely seen unless they are lucky enough to be fed hay and grain by humane nature lovers. Then they straggle in, one by one, the does first, then the wary bucks, at dusk or after dark. Eye shine in a deer's eyes usually warns us that the headlights of our automobiles have blinded the animal, which can be hazardous when driving country roads. But when they are caught by a flashbulb while enjoying a mouthful of alfalfa, their eyes light up like bright ornaments on a Christmas tree and the spirit of giving seems quite visible in their demeanor.

Several times this winter, there have been sightings of deer herds keeping company with flocks of wild turkeys. This is not uncommon perhaps because

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there is safety in numbers and a shared sense of awareness. A deer's wily nature is probably only exceeded by that of a wild turkey; grouped together, their guard is heightened to extraordinary levels, combining eyesight, hearing, and scent, as well as feeling vibrations through the ground. As we walk through the woods, most of us are not aware of the vibrations our footsteps send out to be intercepted by wildlife tuned in to this low frequency. Native Americans were well versed in "putting and ear to the ground," the coined phrase derived from this practice, to warn them of intruders.

In addition to smoke signals in the sky, some Native American tribes in New England signaled each other through the ground, with a geological phenomena called a drum rock, A drum rock consisted of a natural formation of a large flat boulder lying upon another, but almost perfectly balanced so as to be able to be tipped up and down. Braves would climb on one end bringing it down with a boom, and then get off, bringing it back up so the other end would sound like the rumble of thunder. In certain topography and across water, the effect carried for miles. The environmental awareness of wildlife for survival is even more developed and specialized; the messages animals get are loud and clear to them, even though we have lost our own outdoor acumen of what they comprehend.

Levels of comprehension can come alive as we walk upon the living planet beneath our feet, carrying us on a journey of seasonal and spiritual renewal. Along the journey through time and space, how much do we really comprehend of what we see and hear? We still ignore the signals of what we are doing to the atmosphere, the pollution of chemicals leaching into the ground; poisons absorbed into fish, waterfowl, and game; food we cannot eat; water we cannot drink; and air not safe to breathe. In going forward, it seems we also need to turn back the hands of the clock, and correct the error of our ways. Only then should we feel tuned in to the miracles before our very eyes. All those in favor? If the ayes have it, the motion will be carried.

— George Emmons

Selection of Recent Arrivals at the Monterey Library

Adult Fiction

Anne Tyler, *Amateur Marriage*
Aaron Elkins, *Good Blood*
Scott Phillips, *Cottonwood*
Elmore Leonard, *Mr. Paradise*
Dean R. Koontz, *Odd Thomas*

Children/Young Adults

Phyllis Root, *Big Momma Makes the World*
Bryce Milligan, *Prince of Ireland and the Three Magic Stallions*
Margaret Brown, *Fierce Yellow Pumpkin*
Gary Paulsen, *Brian's Hunt*
Jane Yolan, *Sword of the Rightful King*

Adult Nonfiction

James MacGregor Burns and Susan Dunn, *George Washington, 1789–1797*
Amy Tan, *The Opposite of Fate: A Book of Musings*
Nathaniel Philbrick, *Sea of Glory: America's voyage of discovery, the U.S. exploring expedition, 1838–1842*
Studs Terkel, *Hope Dies Hard*
William Safire, *(No Uncertain Terms): More writing from the popular "On Language" column in The New York Times Magazine*
David Sinclair, *The Land That Never Was: Sir Gregor MacGregor and the Greatest Fraud in History*
Daniel Mark Epstein, *What Lips My Lips Have Kissed: The Loves & Love Poems of Edna St. Vincent Millay*

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Will Marsh

Winter ice breaking up on the Konkapot, as seen from Curtis Road bridge

Oil Paint & Waste Motor Oil Collections for Spring 2004

Residents of Monterey, Great Barrington, Otis, Tyringham, New Marlborough and the other towns that form the South Berkshire Household Hazardous Waste Collaborative may bring used motor oil and oil-based paints to the locations listed below for disposal. Preregistration is required by calling the Center for Ecological Technology (CET) at 413-445-4556 or 800-238-1221 or e-mail jamiec@cetonline.org. Acceptable materials are: unwanted oil paint, stains, paint thinners and turpentine as well as used motor oil.

Saturday, April 17, 9 a.m.–noon, **Great Barrington** Recycling Center (Route 7, across from Monument Mountain High School).

Saturday, May 1, 9–11 a.m., **Otis** Recycling Center (West Center Rd, off Route 23 near intersection with Rte. 8).

Saturday, May 22, 9–11 a.m., **Lenox** Dept. of Public Works 275 Main Street (across from MassHighway office).

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Town Warrant Article for Biocontrol of Loosestrife

Question: What plant is classed with kudzu as one of the three nonnative plants that vie for the title of Public Enemy # 1 on the National Wildlife Federation's list of invasive plants? Right, it's purple loosestrife, which is now established on Brewer Pond. According to the NWF, as stated in the April/May 2004 issue of National Wildlife, there has been a "sad gap between the scientific realization of the dangers posed by invasives and the communication of those threats to the public." Not so in Monterey. The Lake Garfield Association has been communicating the message about the invasive nature of loosestrife for several years. We are publicizing this because if we don't take some action, the Lake Garfield and Brewer Pond shores may be part of the stated 4-billion-dollar annual cost of devaluation of world natural resources and their control, as native plants are pushed out by invasive purple loosestrife and shorelines are radically changed.

We now have a chance to get in on a state-approved-and-monitored project to establish biological control of loosestrife. We have a chance to set up this control with a town investment of $500.00 for each of the next three years. That is the cost to Monterey of establishing a small colony of gallerucella beetles, a natural control agent of purple loosestrife. If we commit to joining the statewide program of wetland restoration, within three years we should begin to see control in the form of establishing a native population of gallerucella. This will make for less loosestrife flowering and more native plants taking back their turf from this top wetland invader.

If you like our pond and lake shores to be lined with a balance of native plants that favor wildlife habitat, please vote for the warrant article on Town Meeting day. $1500.00 over three years is the cost to the town of a colony of defenders. And all they want is some purple loosestrife to eat. Let's invite them for dinner.

— Patricia Edelstein
Ecology Team, LGA

CET's 9th Annual Earth Day Clothing & Textile Drive

The Center for Ecological Technology (CET) will hold its ninth annual Used Clothing and Textile Drive to collect, reuse, and recycle old clothing and household textiles. The event will be held in partnership with Goodwill Industries of the Berkshires to help celebrate the 34th anniversary of Earth Day. The drive will take place on Saturday, April 24, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Sunday, April 25, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Clothing should be brought to CET, 112 Elm Street in Pittsfield. Additional regional drop-off sites are also available (listed below).

Last year's textile drive collected over 20 tons of materials from drop-off sites throughout Berkshire County. Goodwill resells the wearable clothing at its local stores and sends the remainder to the textile market. Additionally, Goodwill uses the collection, sorting, and retail sales as job training for individuals with barriers to employment. Last year, Goodwill provided services to 112 individuals in six different programs. The event is coordinated with assistance from the Southern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District, the Tri-Town Health Department (Lee, Lenox, and Stockbridge), Berkshire Bank, Lee Bank-Pittsfield Loan Office, and Banknorth Massachusetts.

All types of clothing are accepted, including sweaters, shirts, skirts, pants, jackets, overcoats, and raincoats. Blankets, gloves, socks, paired shoes, sheets, towels, curtains, and fabric scraps are also acceptable. Clothing must be clean, dry, and delivered in plastic bags. Rugs and carpeting will not be accepted. CET's main goals for this drive are to provide education about reuse and recycling to the Berkshire community.

"The number of households, community organizations, and businesses continue to increase each year" said Alan Silverstein, CET Co-Director. "Our partnership with Goodwill allows for many of the textiles collected to remain in Berkshire County and provide a local opportunity for reuse and job creation, an integral part of Goodwill's mission."

Expanded drop-off sites located around the county are designed to make it easier for Berkshire County residents to participate in the textile collection effort. To date, the following sites have been confirmed.

Great Barrington: Berkshire South Regional Community Center, 15 Crissey Road (April 12 to April 25, Mon. to Fri. 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., Sat. 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., Sun. 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.).

Additional South County sites include: The Tri-Town Health Department, 45 Railroad Street, Lee (April 17–24, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.); Lenox Town Hall, 6 Walker St., Lenox (April 19 to April 23, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.); and Old Parish Church, Main St., Sheffield (April 20 and April 23, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.).

For North County sites or more information on the Textile Drive, please call Amy Johns at CET, 413-445-4556 or 800-238-1221, or visit http://www.cetonline.org/. More drop off sites will be listed on the website as they are finalized.

Drug Discount Card Scam Alert

Across the country a new angle for scamming elders has popped up—all related to the new Medicare discount drug cards that will be offered in May 2004.

Elders should be wary of any solicitation that requires them to provide bank account numbers, credit card numbers, or their social security or Medicare number. At present NO Medicare-approved drug discount cards are available. Insurers such as Prescription Advantage, MassHealth, and other private companies NEVER collect personal information via phone. They will only send written official letters to collect any personal or confidential information.

Elders who encounter benefits-related scams should report their suspicions to the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (888-243-5337), the local police, the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office (617-727-8400), or to Prescription Advantage (1-800-243-4636). Medicare-related scams should be reported to Medicare at 1-800-MEDICARE.

— Bonnie Tedder-Jurgenson

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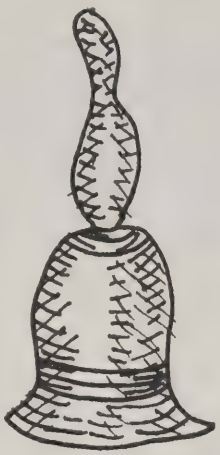
Community Access to the Arts' Annual Performance & Art Exhibit

I serve on the board of a wonderful organization called CATA (Community Access to the Arts). I attended their annual event last year and found it captivating, moving, and inspiring. Berkshire performing artists on staff, including Vikki True and Dawn Lane, team up with disabled "participants" to put on a show that reveals the power of the arts to unify us all, despite our differences. It is truly uplifting.



Save the dates of Friday, May 7, at 6 p.m. or Saturday, May 8, at 1 p.m. for Community Access to the Arts' Annual Performance & Art Exhibit with special guests NBC News Correspondent John Hockenbery and actress Karen Allen. Community Access to the Arts (CATA) is a nonprofit arts organization celebrating 11 years of providing visual and performing arts programs integrating individuals with developmental, physical, emotional and/or mental disabilities with the wider community.

Event chairs are Aline Sosne of Stockbridge and Suky Werman of Lenox. Event proceeds support CATA programs. The event will be held at Shakespeare & Company's Founders' Theatre in Lenox. The Friday Gala Fundraiser Event includes an art exhibit and sale, a 45-minute performance by CATA performing faculty artists and participants, dinner catered by From Ketchup to Caviar, and a silent auction. Tickets are $125 per person and include a ticket to the Saturday performance. Reservations are required.

Saturday, May 8, is the annual performance and art exhibition by CATA participants, faculty artists, and community members. Guests will have a chance to purchase artwork created by CATA participants in the past year's visual arts workshops. CATA Faculty Artists will also display and sell their work. The ninety-minute performance begins at 1 p.m. and is appropriate for all age groups. Suggested ticket price is $30 per person; children 12 and under are free. Reservations are recommended.

Individuals and businesses interested in supporting this CATA event can purchase program advertisements, donate to the silent auction, or become an event sponsor. For more information, contact Community Access to the Arts at 413-528-5485 or visit www.communityaccesstotheARTS.org.

— Liana Toscanini

Remembering Margaret L. Hall

Margaret L. Hall 85, died March 2nd at Fairview Commons Nursing Center, Great Barrington.

She was born in Council Bluffs, Iowa, on February 18, 1919, daughter of Alfred and Mamie Schlotfeldt Norman. She moved to Washington, D.C. and worked for the Naval Dept. during WWII. She moved to Monterey in 1943, where she and her husband, James, were owners of Blue Hill Dairy Farm until 1964. She moved to Great Barrington in 1976.

Her husband, James W., whom she married in Washington, D.C. on February 6, 1943, died April 21, 1982.

She was a former member of the Monterey United Church and a former member of the Monterey Grange. She leaves three sons, James N. of Monterey, Edward L. of New Marlborough, and Joseph L. of North Adams; two daughters, Diane R. Guarnieri of Great Barrington and Susan M. Planas of McDonough, N.Y.; one brother, Edward Norman of Freemont, Nebraska; eight grandchildren; and one great grandson.

Expressions of sympathy in Margaret's memory may be made to Recording for the Blind, c/o Birches-Roy Funeral Home 33 South Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230.

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Remembering Mark Paul, 1925–2004

Mark Paul, a Monterey resident until a few years ago when he moved to northern California to be near other members of his family, died on February 15, 2004, at the age of 79. The last few years of his life were appropriately spent with his loved ones, but he will long be remembered by his many and loyal friends here. For some twenty years he was a highly respected resident of Brookmead Farm at 39 New Marlborough Road, one of the oldest houses in this area, dating back to about 1760. Mark shared the historical landmark with Eric and Alice Roper, good friends going back to his days as a senior partner of Morgan Stanley. Mark also shared the barn, outbuildings, and fields with his neighbor Bob Heath, and together they managed to maintain a high agricultural image of livestock and farming.

He began life as an Ohio farmboy, and when his love of animals eventually brought him full circle to Brookmead, we all shared the visual pleasure of passing the pastoral scene. As a graduate of Yale and then Harvard Business School, with time in the Merchant Marine, the foreign service, and finally Wall Street, he acquired a number of other interests. They included antiques, literature, wallpapering, finance, and history, and just being a country gentleman. When he bought Brookmead from Tom and Suzy Gillis, he brought with him all the experience from another time and place in his life, Sharon, Connecticut, where he had also shared himself in friendships with almost everyone he took a liking to.

Mark was one of the most interesting people you might run into at the Monterey General Store, and when you got to know him better, you found out that he could hardly contain his pride in his three children. You could not blame him for that, with his glamorous twin daughters, Alexandra, an actress of TV *Baywatch* fame, and Caroline, a member of the San Francisco Fire Department who became a *New York Times* best-selling author with her book about this experience, *Fighting Fire*. When either or both came into a room they brightened the atmosphere with their charisma, just as they had brightened the life of their father. Mark was equally proud of his son, Jonathan, who frequently demonstrated the strength of his convictions as an environmental activist, most recently putting his own life and property on the line to protect whales off the west coast from ritual hunting by Native Americans.

In spite of all his success, Mark was very laid back and modest, with a friendly smile, a quiet sense of humor, and penetrating eyes that perceived a deep understanding of the other person. So his memory here is a treasure for those of us who were blessed to be called his friends, just as he was to each of us.

— George Emmons

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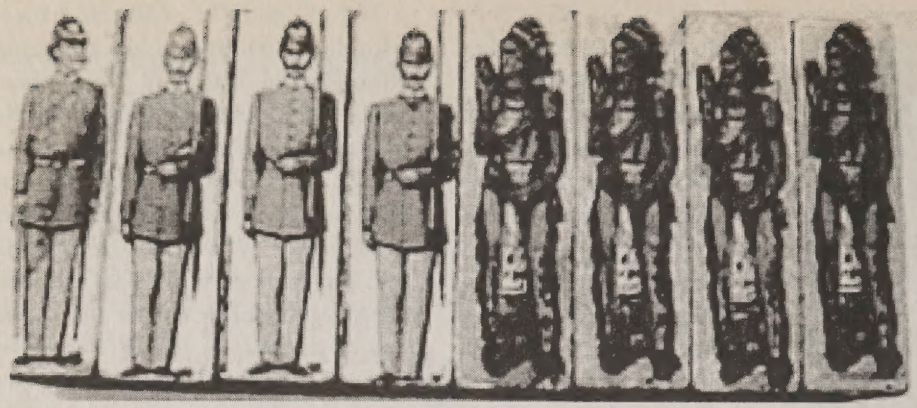

Edie Ross

Collectors and Collecting

Collecting has been a passion of people through the ages. Victor Hugo, it is said, was such a voracious collector that he impoverished himself to the point of destitution. So what is it that makes some of us more pedestrian collectors do what we do: that is, buy items for which there may not be any practical reason or motive?

Loving what you see, and needing to own that item, is a beginning. I started collecting 19th-century handwoven coverlets years ago after seeing the process by which they were woven demonstrated at various museums like the Bethpage Restoration and Sturbridge Village. Often, much to their chagrin, when taking my children there to learn about colonial times in America I was so intrigued that the "edification of our history" was more for me than them. Then when I had the opportunity to purchase an early Arch Davidson indigo and white coverlet I took it. The fact that it was in deplorable condition and that I was not even sure what it was (or who he was) didn't seem to matter. The owner thought that it could be cut up and made into pillows! I was outraged at the thought of this wonderful textile being used in such a way. Decorating my home is not what made me seek out the other coverlets that eventually made their way into my home. Somehow I realized that here was a resource that could and should be preserved for future generations. They needed a home in which they would be safe from the scissors of the decorating world!

From that time I sought out other examples of this art (for that is what it is). I suddenly realized that my passion for collecting other examples of the weaver's art was so infectious that my husband had begun to join me in learning about and exploring this world in which fiber plays such an important part. Once we started to travel this road, there was no stopping. Somehow there is always one out there that you have not yet found—either a particular weaver or color combination or just an indescribably fleeting feeling that there is really more to seek.

I also realized that being a collector is something that does not stop at one type of item. Suddenly the whole world of the 18th and 19th centuries opened up to me in a consuming way. Developing a passion for the world of the "old" can be a consuming love and so it was with me. Along with coverlets I started to collect children's blocks *and* tintype items *and* cameras *and* choppers *and* more. It is said that five items or more make a collection—so I cannot even begin to imagine how many I have! Shall I continue, or can the reader understand that this is a more interesting and certainly more educational and passionate enterprise than the tennis I used to pursue with vigor and interest!

Just remember one thing—to be a true collector you will have to devote your time to learning about that which you seek. Only then will you understand what it is that makes you do what you do—and even then your heart will always rule your head. Why does your heart sing when you find that one thing that you "must" have . . . this time and the next time and the time after that? Worry not about where to put them or that your collectibles and collections are suddenly growing bigger than you. Read a book, play golf or tennis, go on a trip, and suddenly you will see that out-of-the way shop or stall or place with that one corner peeking out from under a pile of other things, and you will have to look at it or see it or touch it to see if this is "the one"!

— Edie Ross

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Edie Ross

Another of Edie's collectibles (see story, p. 22)

The Observer
February 26–March 25

High temp. (3/3, 4, 25)	55°
Low temp. (3/23, 24)	5°
Avg. high temp.	40.3°
Avg. low temp.	20.2°
Avg. temp.	30.3°
Total precipitation (rain and melted snow)	1.56"
Snowfall	14.8"

Precipitation occurred on 16 days.

Youth Baseball

Children ages 5–12 who want to participate in the baseball program in Monterey this season should have a parent contact league president Jim Edelman at 528-0006 or e-mail cljvedelman@aol.com

Players will be grouped according to age. We teach with patience and encouragement. Any child from area towns may take part.

Free Child Care during May 1st Town Meeting

The Town of Monterey will provide free child care during the annual town meeting on Saturday, May 1, 2004, from 9:15 a.m. until the end of the meeting.

The Southern Berkshire YMCA will provide staff and quality care for children ages 18 months and older on site, at the firehouse pavilion/playground.

Please call Marta at 528-YMCA (9622) by April 23rd if you have any questions and/or to preregister your child(ren). This will help determine the number of staff members needed.

Calendar

Every Monday (exc. holidays): Select Board meeting, 8:30 a.m.–noon, Town Offices.

Sunday, April 4: Daylight Savings Time begins. Set clocks forward one hour.
Monday, April 5: Full Moon
Tuesday, April 6: Passover
Thursday, April 8: Free blood pressure clinic, 2:30–3:30 p.m., Town Offices, administered by Visiting Nurses Assoc.
Friday, April 9: Good Friday
Saturday, April 10: Sandisfield Historical Society meeting, 11 a.m, followed by lunch at 12 p.m. Call Norton Fletcher for more information at 413-258-4520.
Sunday, April 11: Easter Sunday. Bring your children to the Easter Egg Hunt on the library lawn at 1 p.m. See p. 8.
Wednesday, April 14: Community Dinner, 6 p.m., Fellowship Hall of Monterey Meetinghouse. See p. 7.
Monday, April 19: Town Office's will be closed for Patriot's Day.
Thursday, April 22: Earth Day
Friday, April 23: Informational session to explain and discuss articles on Town Meeting warrant. 7 p.m., Monterey Firehouse.
Saturday, April 24:
The Berkshire Fish Hatchery celebrates Earth Day with a day of programs, tours, and a fishing derby. Details 528-9761.
Annual CET Earth Day Textile and Clothing Drive. See p. 19.
Square and contra dancing, 8:30–11:30 p.m., Sheffield Grange, Rt. 7, Sheffield. Music by Mountain Laurel, calling by Jeff Walker. All dances are taught, beginners and children are welcome. Adults $6, children $3. Information 528-9385.
Saturday, May 1: Town Meeting, 9:30 a.m., Monterey Firehouse. Free childcare available.

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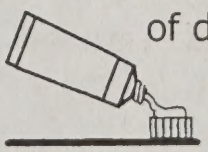
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Our editorial address is *Monterey News*, P. O. Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245. We invite signed letters, articles, drawings, poetry, and photographs from readers. Please send submissions (e-mail or computer disk if possible) by the 20th of the month before publication, addressed to the Editor. Send any change of address, or initial request to receive the *News* by mail (free) to Barbara Tryon, Business Manager. We will typeset a text-only ad for your Monterey-based business, service, or event, or advertisers may submit a computer formatted ad with graphics. Address request for advertising rates and further information to the Editor, or telephone us at 413-528-4347 or e-mail wilmarsh@localnet.com.

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Contributions from local artists this month:
Pat Arnow, pp. 3, 7, 11, 13, 18, 20;
Bonner McAllester, p. 14; Glynis Oliver, p. 8.

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